



Originally published July 11, 2005

Congress should back telecom innovations

To the editor,

There is talk in Washington about updating our nation's telecom laws to deliver more options, innovation and value to our communities. For Tennesseans this kind of reform would mean choices in providers, innovative new services, access to cutting-edge technologies that advance small business success and, ultimately, more jobs. With so much to gain, why wouldn't our legislators update nearly decade-old regulations that barely acknowledge the existence of the Internet? They should instead be encouraging the kind of head-to-head competition and vigorous investment that delivers consumer choice and faster access to innovative services.

Recent congressional hearings focused on two exciting technologies — voice over the Internet, which allows consumers to get phone service through their cable provider or Internet-based company; and broadband television, which allows phone companies to offer new viewing choices beyond solely cable and satellite. These new, fast-growing technologies are perfect examples of the innovation we need to encourage across the board. A modern telecom policy that fosters investment and innovation is just the ticket to delivering a whole new world of communications choices to consumers.

I hope Congressman Gordon will continue to work toward telecom reform that speeds communications innovations to more Tennesseans. From new jobs and economic opportunities to new choices and faster access to the latest "gee whiz" service, too much is at stake to stand by and let dated telecom laws slow down our modern world.

Ruth Westerfield

Country Park Lane

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